



KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Exercise pits Cyber security professionals against each other to fight Cybercrime

Cyber security professionals will be forced to perform under pressure during the West Michigan Cyber Security Consortium's Red vs. Red vs. Blue Cyber Event on Wednesday, July 29th, 2015. The event will be held at the GVSU DeVos Campus in Grand Rapids, from 8:30am to 3:00pm.

During the competition, the Blue Team will be tasked with defending the virtual town of Alphaville from Cyber-attacks launched by two Red Teams. The second Red Team represents the presence of multiple criminal elements all with the same nefarious goals.

"The consortium's members are people who are engaged in cyber protection full time every day, including members of law enforcement agencies from around the state," said Barb Hiemstra, information security director at Kent County's IT department. "Exercises like this one allow us to develop new strategies in a virtual environment that is safe and secure."

The competition takes place on Michigan Cyber Range. The virtual Alphaville has locations that might be tempting to cyber terrorists or other criminals, such as a city hall, a power plant and a library.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation says, in its most recent report, ([click here](#)) that it received over a quarter of a million criminal complaints to its Internet Crimes Complaint Center (IC3) in 2014 alone. Financial losses nationwide amounted to a total of \$800,492,073. More than \$12 million dollars was lost by Michiganders in various scams, swindles and cons.

"These statistics are sobering, and they don't even take into account the role of malicious attacks on government owned computers and networks," said Tiffany Kim, homeland security planner with the Kent County Sheriff's Department. "It underscores the need to be vigilant and try to stay one step ahead of millions of potential criminals. Training and exercises like this help us do that."

Media wishing to attend the event are welcome throughout the day but are advised to call Barb Hiemstra's cell phone at 437-5760 to make arrangements that are most time efficient. Anyone who wishes to watch live can email wmcybersecurity@kentcountymi.gov by 5pm Friday, July 24.

